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SUBJECT: INDONESIAN MUSLIM GROUPS PROTEST TREATMENT OF
UIGHURS

REF: BEIJING 1972

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph L. Novak, reasons 1.4 (b+d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: Hundreds of protesters from various Indonesian hardline Islamic groups rallied outside the Chinese Embassy in Jakarta on July 13 protesting Chinese treatment of ethnic Uighurs. The protesters--who briefly clashed with security guards--urged that the GOI put diplomatic pressure on the Chinese government over the matter. The Chinese Muslim community in Indonesia has also called for the Chinese government to respect the human rights of Uighurs. There were also protests on July 14. The GOI, for its part, has said it will not comment on the situation. END SUMMARY.

RALLIES IN JAKARTA AND ELSEWHERE

12. (SBU) Following recent violence in Xinjiang Province, China, hundreds of protesters from a coalition of hardline Muslim groups gathered in front of the Chinese Embassy in Jakarta on July 13. The protesters, organized by the Islamic People's Forum (FUI) and the Islamic Defender's Front (FPI), demanded that China "end its violence against the Uighurs." Some of the protesters called for "jihad" to help Uighurs "liberate their homeland."

13. (SBU) Although FUI protest leader Muhammad Al Khathath said the protest was meant to be peaceful, there was a brief skirmish with embassy security guards when the Chinese Charge d'Affaires would not meet with the protesters. (Note: The Chinese Embassy later issued a statement to the press, defending China's actions and blaming problems in Xinjiang on "outside forces.") There were no injuries and the rally ended peacefully. Some of the protesters were reportedly Uighurs studying in Indonesia. (Note: FUI and FPI protests over Middle East issues often occur outside the U.S. Embassy.)

14. (U) Smaller rallies on the same theme were held in various other cities in Indonesia on July 13. All the rallies were peaceful. There were also some rallies on July 14.

CHINESE MUSLIMS EXPRESS CONCERN

15. (SBU) The normally business-focused Indonesian Chinese Muslim Association (PITI) also criticized the Chinese government over actions in Xinjiang and called for Muslims around the world "to unite in support of the Uighurs." The

group's spokesman said he regretted the "silence of Muslim nations that have ignored the decades of suffering, discrimination and persecution." (Note: Most Indonesian Chinese are Christian, Buddhist or Confucian. A minority is Muslim.)

GOI HAS NO COMMENT

16. (U) Foreign Minister Wirajuda has said the GOI has no comment on the situation. Indonesian Ambassador to China Sudrajat (one name only) was quoted as stating that he believed that China would be able to deal with the unrest in "a lawful manner" and that the situation would "return to normal soon."

17. (C) In the meantime, the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), the largest Islamic-based political party and a member of the governing coalition, condemned the Chinese government's actions. PKS parliamentarian Zulkieflimansyah (one name only) told us that the PKS was concerned but had no plans to organize any rallies. (Note: In the past, the PKS has sponsored many rallies over Gaza and Iraq, for example. If the PKS gets involved in an issue, it can bring the crowds.) Leaders of large mainstream Muslim organizations, such as Nadhlatul Islam and Muhammadiyah, have made some comments regarding the treatment of the Uighurs, but their organizations have not participated in rallies as of yet.

HUME